

Washington, D.C. – Congressman J. Randy Forbes (VA-04), Chairman of the House Armed Services Seapower and Projection Forces Subcommittee, and Congressman Rob Wittman (VA-01), Chairman of the House Armed Services Readiness Subcommittee submitted a letter today to the House Appropriations Committee urging the protection of specific military programs vital to National Security against the harmful impacts of a Continuing Resolution based on Fiscal Year 2012 appropriations.

“Mitigating the effects of a prolonged Continuing Resolution and further defense cuts, which threaten to eliminate thousands of jobs and seriously degrade our military strength for years to come, is our highest Congressional priority,” Congressman Forbes said. “These programs represent a ‘red line’ that America must not cross in terms of adequately meeting our national security needs.”

The list of programs designated as essential for national security includes:

- Fully funding Navy modernization and maintenance programs to sustain existing fleet readiness levels
- Completing the refueling and overhaul of the USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN-71)
- Providing for the refueling and overhaul of the USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN-72)
- Providing new authority to begin construction of USS John F. Kennedy (CVN-79)
- Ensuring multiyear procurement and quantity increases for the Virginia class of nuclear attack submarines and the Arleigh Burke class of guided missile destroyers
- Completing delivery of the amphibious assault ship USS America (LHA-6)
- Allowing for the continued operation of the Moored Training Ship
- Providing for a quantity increase in the procurement of the P-8A Poseidon aircraft.

“These programs are absolutely essential for our national security in the 21st century,” Congressman Wittman said. “Navy maintenance and new ship construction rely on an industrial base that cannot be turned on and off like a spigot. They require a sustained investment that cannot be held hostage to partisan wrangling in Washington. While we must balance our budget and get our fiscal house in order, the result of an inability to adequately pursue these programs will be real and serious national security failures.”

If Congress fails to pass an FY13 appropriations bill and instead funds the government at the

previous years' level, the Defense Department will be forced to dramatically reduce its maintenance and construction activities for the year. [The letter is available here](#) .